533 his waist from which hang a number of shells, claws, little horns,
222 teeth and similar trifles, beats on that rustic drum day and night without ceasing and, with the continous movement of his body, makes the trinkets about his waist rattle all this accompanied by a song or rather a lugubrious and high-pitched shouting which can be heard at a great distance. This ridiculous performance is not a simple demonstration of rejoining but rather, in their opinion, a rite necessary to hasten the ripening of the longed for and beneficent fruit."

"When a woman arrives from the forest laden with fruit, roots
222 or other eatables, all the other women of the village crowd to her
262 hut and she, after having set aside enough for the sustenance of her family, distributes the rest, the other women not saying a word of
[626] showing any sign of appreciation. Were she to refrain from giving away her surplus, it would cause the greatest displeasure, and might even provoke some dangerous quarrel."

"The Mataguayos are timid and cowardly, but vengeful in
181 the extreme. They never forget an offense--sooner or later they will
[671] be avenged. The law of requital is unbreakable for them. They avoid making war when this is possible, but if they are attacked they
[411] defend themselves. Their most common weapon is the arrow."

"They recognize no authority and no law. The child obeys
● 593 its parents if it wishes to and the latter, though they may love their children, have no power at all over them. Nevertheless one does not generally encounter lack of respect toward the old or toward the unfortunate." [594]

"The men busy themselves with fishing and only very rarely
462 indulge in hunting. Their agricultural activities are limited to the
[241] sowing of a few clumps of pumpkins and watermelons. With the
[283] juice of the latter they make aloja. Some of them also devote their time to making thin ropes of agave fiber with which they construct their nets."

"All other work is done by the women. She must not only prepare the food but also fetch fruit and roots from the forest; not only bring water but also chop firewood; not only look after the cleanliness of the hut but also make it. In one word: she is a slave."

"When a girl reaches nubility she is hidden in a corner of the
881 hut and covered with fronds and rags. It is illicit for her to speak to anybody or taste meat or fish for a determined length of time. Meanwhile a drummer goes through the same ceremony in front of her

take pains to comb themselves, particularly the women. I remember an occasion when I wished very much to obtain a paddle, made of "palo-fierro"-[iron-wood--Translator] and having two blades, the blades ending in long, narrow points. It belonged to an Indian friend of mine who had quite a beautiful wife. I offered him a comb in exchange for the double paddle, but after having considered the matter for a while he refused to make the exchange. His wife seemed to me to be very sorry that the deal had not come off, and she must have made use of all her wiles for on the following day her husband spontaneously came [176] and proposed that we make the exchange. It may be that the reader would have thought better of my being a little more generous, but let it be remembered that if I had given my comb away I would not then have been able to obtain the paddle, which was of more interest to me than the Adamic Indian couple.

What I have said of the Matacos can also be said of the Tobas, with this addition, that the Tobas are taller than the former Indians and generally show a larger expanse of forehead -- I do not know if they are actually broader -- owing to their habit of tying their hair up with a band. This information is true also of the Mocovíes and Chulupíes, all of whom inhabit the Argentine Gran Chaco, to the north of which, in the Bolivian Chaco, live the Chiriguanos and Cirionoses.

Among all these Indians the skin color varies between that of new copper and mud, there being also, here and there, some with blackish markings or blemishes.

Chapter III

Some Ethnic Characteristics

It is customary to say that these Indians are extremely dirty, but I have some very serious doubts in that regard, for I have seen them, in the summer time, run into the river for pleasure's sake at certain fixed hours of the day in great numbers, both-men and women, each sex in its own determined place. This would appear to be a custom and not a mere whim. In addition to this they often go into the water to fish. It is true that they seem to be dirty, mostly because of their

The opposite could well be demonstrated but in order not to stray from these my Indians, let me say that I have seen proof positive of conjugal love among polygamists.

We had on board an Indian with his young and beautiful partner, whom he loved and adored as though she were a representation of the Virgin.

In that business of the Indian who was bitten by a snake and whom we treated, his wife came to him immediately and cared for him for twenty days without ever leaving his side.

Chief Pascual, whose wife was captured and carried off in a surprise raid -- she being old and ugly --, organized an invasion, tracked down the attackers, fought like a lion and rescued his partner from the hands of the enemy. These are facts which happened in a short time while I was present in that area.

When an Indian puts in an appearance and asks for something, he never forgets his children, his wife or his relatives: when he receives anything capable of being divided up, he distributes it, not only to the above but also to his companions.

I have also noticed that mothers are always extraordinarily loving with their children; and have noted that the inter-tribal wars and the mass killings of the inhabitants of a given village are always motivated by the need to avenge offences offered against compatriots or relatives. And if this does not reflect loving concern, what does?

[218] They are cruel, but only regarding prisoners of war whom they condemn to death. We are hardly in a condition to judge them for this cruelty since we did ourselves do the very same until recently; put it into wholesale practice against the Indians themselves during the period of conquest, and continue to do so against them even now when we can do it with impunity.

Among the Indians this custom of killing prisoners is necessary for their personal security in the nomadic life they lead in which they are continually exposed to surprise attacks, and it furthermore frees them from the shame of slavery, an unknown phenomenon amongst them. (1) Looked at from another point

1. This does not agree with what is recounted about the Mbayas and other tribes, who, as report has it, have slaves. (Ed.)

3: Metraux E-5 (1933) 1939 SI7 Mataco SI7

584 chooses a husband for his daughter, but he would never go
585 against his wife's wish. The ceremony is not celebrated.
The son-in-law lives first at the hut of his wife's father where
he stays for three months at least, working for him. Later
591 he can build a hut for himself. The young couple live in a
separate compartment.

Nowadays either the bride follows the bridegroom or he
595 goes to live with her, according to circumstances. Ordinarily
men have only one wife, some have two, but never more.
[593] Except for adultery a husband never beats his wife. Although
837 a woman is exposed to a severe beating if her husband disco-
vers that she has betrayed him, it does not prevent many
women from doing so. A woman will choose a day when
her husband is absent and then send a child to tell her lover
that she is alone. A couple must not be seen together for
[579] there would be some gossip. A man generally leaves an
unfaithful wife after beating her first. He challenges his
[831] rival and they fight with knives. The different «milks»
must not be mixed up.

XVI. Chiefs

622 All the members of the tribe follow the *cacique* everywhere
without protest. As for him, he is responsible for all the
members of his group. If one of the latter has committed
[672] a theft, even outside of the tribe, the *cacique* will be arrested
by the police. Quarrels among members of the same group
[627] are settled by the *cacique*. If a big *cacique* is killed in a
[726] fight his troop retreats immediately, even if the other *caciques*
are still living.

XVII. War

726 In ancient times, when a young man was going to war,
he pinched the skin of his thigh and drove the sharpened
825 bone of a jaguar into it. This operation was supposed to
make the warrior courageous. Members of a war party
did the same with a peccari's bone so they would be fierce,

5: Fock E-5 (1962) 1963 S17 Mataco S17

583 this will not influence her choice and that of her parents. An abortion will be
581 produced artificially should the man prove to be inacceptable. Should the girl
847 prove to be pregnant at a time when she has started a new, more stable, relation, the new young man will demand that she aborts.

585 Thus the consummation of the marriage, the creation of a family, is, for the
591 Mataco, identical with the commencement of a completely valid marriage. As a rule the family moves shortly after the birth to its own hut, though still near
[178] the girl's parents. Village matrilocality is permanent, and until about 40 years
[342] ago, when communal houses were still the most common, the sharing of a hut with the wife's family for a whole lifetime, was the rule.

593 Already in connexion with her initiation each girl is given certain advice by
[881] her mother concerning the proper behaviour as a married person. The mother
[867] will tell her, for example, that she must treat her coming in-laws as though they
[606] were her own parents and that she must always be generous when it is a matter of sharing food with them. She will also counsel the girl to show respect to her future husband, fetching fuel, for example, when he is away fishing, and ensuring that there is plenty of water for him when he returns from hunting. Willingness to cooperate and mutual respect are very typical of the relations between man and wife. The man's position in marriage is formally the same. He must regard his
[606] wife's parents as his own, must be generous to them, though in fact they do not treat him with the same indulgence they would show a son. In any conflict that may arise they side with the daughter against the husband. Should he not be sufficiently industrious he will be sent out to fish or hunt, and if unsuccessful he will be reproached, something that no Mataco would do to a son. If a man quarrels with his mother-in-law he is chased away. His happiness depends to a high degree upon an equable temperament and ability to obtain food. But as his wife will
[476] always share his bag with relations and friends, and because matrilocality prevails, the wife's family will always obtain the lion's share of what he brings back.

606 The position of a son-in-law as a stranger in another band also raises difficulties
609 for him. In case of dispute his wife's family or other local people will be able to say: "We don't know him and don't trust him". Perhaps he has no kin in the village to vouch for him and give him assistance. The position of a son-in-law can thus be compared to that of a stranger in a big city, irresponsible because he is unknown, and overlooked for that reason.

593 The mutual relations of married couples are naturally stamped by matrilo-
[554] cality and the woman's very considerable occupational effort, which together give the wife a good social position in relation to her husband. In the meantime it is more through the wife's family that this status is manifested. As between the sexes the husband still dominates. As a rule it is the husband who has the say, but it is often the woman who decides what is to be said. The latent tension
[182] between family and sex results in a curiously unintegrated behaviour. By day a man and wife behave almost like strangers to each other. They are extremely terse

5: Fock E-5 (1962) 1963 SI7 Mataco SI7

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[593] Fig. 3.—Normally separated during the day because of different occupations, the single family joins during the night in gossip and sleep. In winter the Mataco sleep indoor on platform beds, in summer normally in the open on furs and with a log as a pillow. Flash-phot. Fock.

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in their conversation and show no sign of affection. A man going out to hunt merely says: "I am off and shall return in 3–4 days". She says at most "Very good", and when he comes back there will be no form of greeting or conversation. Married couples who break this rule and evince great devotion or jealousy are not expected to remain together for any length of time, as in this way they will bind themselves to each other. This will stop them attending to their respective occupations which often take them in different directions. Devotion between man and wife, undoubtedly often present, belongs to the night only and is closely connected with the sexual life. It is as though the recollection of the first trial marriage has delineated a pattern to be followed; first the intimate, nocturnal meeting at the dancing-place and in the girl's home; then the sudden awakening to the demands of the father-in-law. It is a general feature with both children and adults that they are far more confident and daring by night than by day.

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The Mataco are monogamous. There are very few examples of men with two or three wives, and then it was always a matter of chiefs. The polygyny of chiefs is probably an ancient custom, as it is sanctioned in the account about the first appearance of woman. Incidentally, monogamy is strictly enforced, and no form of extra-marital sexual relations is socially sanctioned. In case of infidelity

/319 cont./

433 They do not work, plant, or do anything similar; they
229 are but mediocre fishermen and barely hunters. To live they
241 lay up great stocks of chañar, algarrobas, and mistol fruits, and with some gourd seeds placed under the earth they have extraordinary harvests if the year is moderately rainy.

786 They organize their orgies when the algarrobas, chañar,
578 and mistol are in season, and then the quarrels and murders occur
682 among the men; these crimes go unpunished by the authorities, for there are none. But if the one who has perished had relatives they will take revenge.

342 /320/ They do not bother to build houses or such things.
513 They make a kind of oven; for it they bend some branches of small trees, fix them to the ground, cover these branches with straw or grass, and they sleep underneath in a pile in the company of their dogs.

164 This is the reason for the excessive mange which kills
515 them and makes them look so disgusting, since they are not at all partisans of the daily bath, as the Chiriguano are, and when they do bathe, they roll about in the river sand or in the ashes of their oven-houses.

584 They do not seek the consent of their parents for marriage
585 nor do they have ceremonies. Do two young persons, a man and a woman, love each other? They leave the common settlement, go to the woods, stay a few weeks, and then return, now married, to live with their in-laws or to make another oven like the one of their elders.

586 Young people divorce each other easily, but they are
152 more constant than the Chiriguano in married life. Nonetheless,
837 the women are very jealous and do not readily consent to their
593 husbands' being with other women; for this reason they keep them content with the work of bringing them much fruit from the forest and caressing them.

302 Men and women cut their hair; some of them stain their
301 faces and pierce their ear lobs, in which they put a piece of wood, like the Toba, but this is not a distinctive mark of the race.